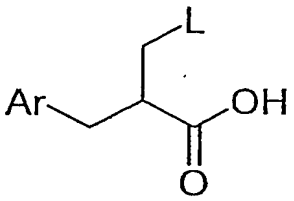
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

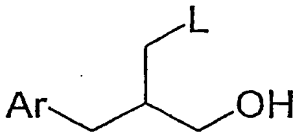
LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1.(original): A method for producing a 2-aralkylpropionic acid represented by Formula (2):



(2)

wherein Ar is an optionally substituted aryl group having 6 to 18 carbon atoms, and L is a sulfonyloxy group or a halogen atom, comprising oxidizing a 2-aralkyl-1-propanol represented by Formula (1):



(1)

wherein Ar and L are as defined above, using a permanganate under an acidic condition.

2.(original): The method according to Claim 1 wherein Ar is an optionally substituted phenyl group or an optionally substituted naphthyl group.

3.(original): The method according to Claim 1 wherein Ar is an optionally substituted phenyl group.

4.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 3~~ Claim 1, wherein L is an optionally substituted straight, branched or cyclic alkylsulfonyloxy group having 1 to 6 carbon atoms or an optionally substituted arylsulfonyloxy group having 6 to 18 carbon atoms.

5.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 3~~ Claim 1, wherein L is a methanesulfonyloxy group or a toluenesulfonyloxy group.

6.(original): The method according to Claim 1 wherein Ar is a phenyl group and L is a methanesulfonyloxy group.

7.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 3~~ Claim 1, wherein L is a halogen atom.

8.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 7~~ Claim 1, wherein the permanganate is an alkaline metal salt of permanganic acid.

9.(original): The method according to Claim 8 wherein the alkaline metal salt of permanganic acid is potassium permanganate.

10.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 9~~ Claim 1, wherein the acidic condition is formed in acidic aqueous solution consisting of water and acetic acid or water and sulfuric acid.

11.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 10~~ Claim 1, wherein a solvent mixture of the acidic aqueous solution and an organic solvent is employed.

12. (original): The method according to Claim 11 wherein the organic solvent is an organic solvent having no compatibility with water and the reaction is conducted in a biphasic system with the acidic aqueous solution.

13.(original): The method according to Claim 12 wherein the organic solvent having no compatibility with water is an acetic alkyl ester having 1 to 6 carbon atoms.

14.(original): The method according to Claim 13 wherein the acetic alkyl ester having 1 to 6 carbon atoms.

15.(original): The method according to Claim 11 wherein the organic solvent is an organic solvent having a compatibility with water.

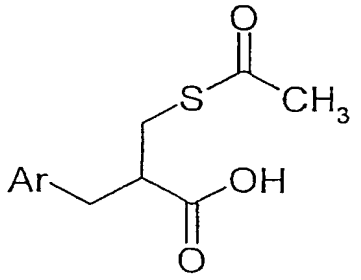
16.(original): The method according to Claim 15 wherein the organic solvent having a compatibility with water is acetone, tetrahydrofuran or tert-butanol.

17.(currently amended): The method according to ~~Claim 16~~ Claim 11, wherein the acidic aqueous solution consists of sulfuric acid and water and the reaction is conducted in a solvent mixture system with acetone.

18.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 17~~ Claim 1, wherein a treatment with a reducing agent is conducted under an acidic condition after the reaction.

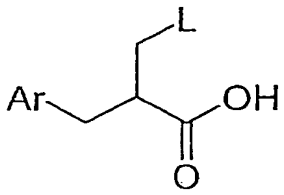
19.(original): The method according to Claim 18 wherein the reducing agent is a hydrogen sulfite, sulfite, pyrosulfite or an aqueous solution thereof.

20.(original): A method for producing a 2-aralkyl-3-acetylthiopropionic acid represented by Formula (3):



(3)

wherein Ar is an optionally substituted aryl group having 6 to 18 carbon atoms comprising reacting a 2-aralkylpropionic acid represented by Formula (2):



(2)

wherein Ar is as defined above and L is a sulfonyloxy group or a halogen atom with a thioacetate in the presence of water.

21.(original): The method according to Claim 20 wherein Ar is an optionally substituted phenyl group or an optionally substituted naphthyl group.

22.(original): The method according to Claim 20 wherein Ar is an optionally substituted phenyl group.

23.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 22~~ Claim 20, wherein L is an optionally substituted straight, branched or cyclic alkylsulfonyloxy group having 1 to 6 carbon atoms or an optionally substituted arylsulfonyloxy group having 6 to 18 carbon atoms.

24.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 22~~ Claim 20, wherein L is a methanesulfonyloxy group or a toluenesulfonyloxy group.

25.(original): The method according to Claim 20 wherein Ar is a phenyl group and L is a methanesulfonyloxy group.

26.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 22~~ Claim 20, wherein L is a halogen atom.

27.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 26~~ Claim 20, wherein the reaction solvent is water.

28.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 26~~ Claim 20, wherein the reaction solvent is a solvent mixture of water and an organic solvent.

29.(original): The method according to Claim 28 wherein the organic solvent is an organic solvent having no compatibility with water and the reaction is conducted in a biphasic system with water.

30.(original): The method according to Claim 29 wherein the organic solvent having no compatibility with water is an aromatic hydrocarbon or an acetic alkyl ester having 1 to 6 carbon atoms.

31.(original): The method according to Claim 30 wherein the organic solvent having no compatibility with water is toluene or ethyl acetate.

32.(original): The method according to Claim 28 wherein the organic solvent is an organic solvent having a compatibility with water.

33.(original): The method according to Claim 32 wherein the organic solvent having a compatibility with water is alcohol having 1 to 3 carbon atoms.

34.(original): The method according to Claim 33 wherein the organic solvent having a compatibility with water is methanol.

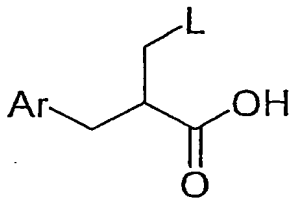
35.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 34~~ Claim 20, wherein the thioacetate is an alkaline metal salt of thioacetic acid.

36.(original): The method according to Claim 35 wherein the alkaline metal salt of thioacetic acid is potassium thioacetate.

37.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 36~~ Claim 20, wherein the thioacetate is formed in situ using thioacetic acid and a base.

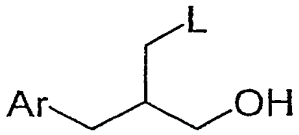
38.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 37~~ Claim 20, wherein the reaction is conducted under an inert gas atmosphere.

39.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 20 to 38~~ Claim 20, wherein a 2-aralkylpropionic acid represented by Formula (2):



(2)

wherein Ar and L are as defined above, is obtained by oxidizing a 2-aralkyl-1-propanol represented by Formula (1):



(1)

wherein Ar and L are as defined above, using a permanganate under an acidic condition.

40.(original): The method according to Claim 39 wherein the permanganate is an alkaline metal salt of permanganic acid.

41.(original): The method according to Claim 40 wherein the alkaline metal salt of permanganic acid is potassium permanganate.

42.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 39 to 41~~ Claim 39, wherein the acidic condition is formed in an acidic aqueous solution consisting of water and acetic acid or water and sulfuric acid.

43.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 39 to 42~~ Claim 39, wherein a solvent mixture of the acidic aqueous solution and an organic solvent is employed.

44.(original): The method according to Claim 43 wherein the organic solvent is an organic solvent having no compatibility with water and the reaction is conducted in a biphasic system with the acidic aqueous solution.

45.(original): The method according to Claim 44 wherein the organic solvent having no compatibility with water is an acetic alkyl ester having 1 to 6 carbon atoms.

46.(currently amended): The method according to ~~Claim 45~~ Claim 43, wherein the acidic aqueous solution consists of water and acetic acid and the reaction is conducted in a biphasic system of ethyl acetate and the solvent mixture.

47.(original): The method according to Claim 43 wherein the organic solvent is an organic solvent having a compatibility with water.

48.(original): The method according to Claim 47 wherein the organic solvent having a compatibility with water is acetone, tetrahydrofuran or tert-butanol.

49.(currently amended): The method according to ~~Claim 48~~ Claim 43, wherein the acidic aqueous solution consists of sulfuric acid and water and the reaction is conducted in a solvent mixture system with acetone.

50.(currently amended): The method according to ~~any one of Claims 39 to 49~~ Claim 39, wherein the reaction from a compound represented by Formula (1) to a compound represented by Formula (2) is followed by a treatment with a reducing agent under an acidic condition.

51.(original): The method according to Claim 50 wherein the reducing agent is a hydrogen sulfite, sulfite, pyrosulfite or an aqueous solution thereof.